DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 237 037 HE 016 817

TITLE The Quality of Women's Education at Harvard University. A Survey of Sex Discrimination in the Graduate and Professional Schools.
INSTITUTION Women Students' Coalition of Harvard Univ., Cambridge, MA.
PUB DATE Jun 80
NOTE 42p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Ancillary School Services; Course Content; *Females; *Graduate Study; Higher Education; Peer Relationship; *Professional Education; Questionnaires; *Sex Bias; *Sex Discrimination; Sex Stereotypes; Student Attitudes; Student College Relationship; Student Teacher Relationship; *Womens Education
IDENTIFIERS *Harvard University MA

ABSTRACT

The educational experiences of female graduate students at Harvard University were studied. Based on 258 responses from an open-ended questionnaire sent to all graduate women in fall 1979, the kind of sex discrimination that occurs at the university is described. The types of experiences that reduce women's equal educational access are also highlighted. Examples of student responses are included to illustrate the kinds of intended and unconscious actions, remarks, and arrangements that women students consider discriminatory. Discrimination reported focused on difficulties encountered in the process of education, including discriminatory treatment by faculty or colleagues; the omission of the experiences and contributions of women from course materials and research; and insensitivity in structure and administration, including the absence of support services. Most women cited the need for more women professors as the key to solving all three types of problems. The methods of collecting, categorizing, and analyzing the information, and the characteristics of respondents are described. Survey questions and study recommendations are included. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED237037

HE

THE QUALITY OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

A Survey of Sex Discrimination in the Graduate and Professional Schools

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Laura Persson
Harvard Univ.
Women Student Coalition
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

HE 016 817

Women Students' Coalition

June 1980

Acknowledgments

We received encouragement and financial support for this report from many people and organizations at Harvard University. First of all, we express our gratitude to Dr. Susan Bailey of the Office of Institutional Policy Research on Women's Education at Harvard and Radcliffe, to Ms. Peggy Plympton and Dr. Simone Reagor of the Radcliffe Forum, and to members of the Ad-Hoc Committee for the Concerns of Women at Harvard-Radcliffe. Their help was essential to the completion of this report. We regret that, due to the recent decision of Radcliffe College to abolish the Radcliffe Forum, in the future students will not have the network of support the Forum provided.

Financial support for copying and distributing this report within individual schools was provided by the Deans of the participating Harvard graduate and professional schools: Dean Graham Allison (Kennedy School of Government), Dean Glen W. Bowersock (Harvard College), Dean Edward L. Keenan (Graduate School of Arts and Sciences), Dean Maurice Kilbridge (Graduate School of Design), Dean George Rupp (Divinity School), Dean Albert M. Sacks (Law School), Dean Paul N. Ylvisaker (Graduate School of Education); by the Hamilton Hunt Committee of the Medical School and the School of Public Health; and by Dr. Nancy Randolph, Special Assistant to the President for Affirmative Action. Work study assistance was provided by the Office of Institutional Policy Research on Women's Education at Harvard and Radcliffe. Copying and mailing assistance during the process was provided by the Radcliffe Forum. Additional assistance was provided by Dr. Margaret Gullette, Danforth Center; Ms. Suzanne Lipsky, GSAS; Ms. Barbara Dean, Medical Area; Ms. Eileen Shapiro, formerly of the Medical Area.

We also wish to thank our editor, Ms. Donna Hulsizer, and our typist, Ms. Theresa Kovich, for their sympathetic and efficient assistance, and our personal friends who loyally put up with us during the often difficult year of preparing this report.

Most of all, however, we offer profound gratitude to the graduate student women who responded to our request for information about their lives by filling out and returning our questionnaires.

Description of the Women Students' Coalition

The Women Students' Coalition (WSC) of Harvard University is an organization of women students from all of the graduate and professional schools* -- the only university-wide organization concerned with women's issues. Founded in the fall of 1978, our purpose is to promote equal educational opportunity for women at the University by sharing information and taking action on specific women's issues. In addition to preparing this report, we have:

1. Arranged and publicized Betty Friedan's lecture at the Kennedy School last fall to an overflow audience of more than 700 people, including many undergraduates. The Radcliffe Forum paid the speaker's fee and our pre-lecture potluck dinner was held at Simone Reagor's home.

2. Sponsored monthly wine-and-cheese parties for graduate and professional school women -- at the Law School and for women in the sciences, for example. An upcoming gathering will feature a panel of successful women job candidates speaking on "What You Need to Know About Getting an Academic Job." Graduate and undergraduate women attend these gatherings and they form the heart of our attempts to build networks among academic women. The Radcliffe Forum pays for the cost of printing posters, mailing announcements, and modest refreshments.

3. Formed a Faculty Hiring Taskforce to educate the community about the importance of women faculty. We are presently interviewing every woman tenured in GSAS and the tenured women in the professional schools in order to prepare a statement on the need to increase the number of tenured women on the faculty.

---

*Except for the Harvard Business School.

This report was conceived and written between June 1979 and May 1980 by a Taskforce of the Women Students' Coalition comprised of:

Lynne Brickley
School of Education

Cynthia Dahlin
Kennedy School of Government

Elizabeth Eames
GSAS, Anthropology Department

Emily Friedan
Medical School

Emily Hancock
School of Education

Carol Jones
GSAS, Economics Department

Carol Lasser
GSAS, History Department

Suzanne Marilley
GSAS, Government Department

Lauri Perman
GSAS, Sociology Department

Erin Phelps, Chairperson
School of Education

Lauri Robertson
GSAS, Chemistry Department

Nancy Sherman
GSAS, Philosophy Department

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	i
Description of the Women Students' Coalition	ii
I. Introduction: What is the Educational Experience of Graduate Women at Harvard?	1
II. Findings: How Does Sex Discrimination Affect the Quality of Education?	3
A. The Process of Education: Interaction of Women Students with Faculty and Colleagues	6
B. The Content of Education: Course Materials	16
C. The Support Structure of Education: Services and Facilities	20
III. A Recommendation: More Women Faculty	25
IV. Conclusions	29
References	31
Appendix: Methods of Collecting, Categorizing, and Analyzing Information	32

I. Introduction

What is the educational experience of graduate women at Harvard?

The initial idea for a survey addressing this question came in part from a 1974 report issued by the Student Taskforce of the Joint Committee on the Status of Women at the Harvard Medical School, the Harvard School of Dental Medicine, and the Harvard School of Public Health. In this report, "Obstacles to Equal Education at Harvard Resulting from Sex Discrimination," the authors categorized the first one hundred incidents of sex discrimination reported by students in response to a questionnaire; they found that women objected to "the demeaning atmosphere caused by attitudes of condescension, hostility, role stereotyping and sexual innuendo as well as to unequal facilities and educational opportunities" (p. 8). In the Fall of 1979, we distributed a questionnaire in the registration packets of women students in the graduate and professional schools.[1] Its purpose was to gather information on how women describe and assess their experiences as women at Harvard University. In particular, we sought to understand how these experiences affect the quality of education received by women students. This report documents the responses to that questionnaire. The report is explicitly qualitative: We are concerned with the sorts of experiences women encounter in the Harvard community, rather than with demonstrating how frequently discriminatory incidents occur.

Our goals in writing this report are:

1. To promote discussion of the issues raised on an individual school and department level throughout the University;

2. To provide data which will allow an assessment of the changes that have occurred over the five years since the 1974 report;

3. To serve as a basis for recommendations for both institutional and personal changes.

We provide a sampling of the responses to the questionnaire to illustrate the kinds of intended and unconscious actions, remarks, and arrangements which women students consider discriminatory. We hope that this report will inform members of the Harvard community of the forms in which sexual discrimination exists in their university, and that it will

---

[1] One school was excluded; women students at the Harvard Business School declined to participate.

spur them to actions which will remove these burdens from their female colleagues and students.

On the basis of 258 responses from the open-ended questionnaire (see Appendix A) sent to all graduate student women in Fall 1979, we describe the kind of sex discrimination that occurs at Harvard University. We are primarily concerned with highlighting the kinds of experiences that reduce women's opportunities for equal educational access. We find that discrimination is not limited to particular aspects of the educational system, but instead is pervasive. There are problems in the process of education, in the critically important interactions between faculty and students and among students themselves; in the content of education consisting of lectures and course materials; and in the support structure of education that makes it possible for students to live and work at the university. Each of these areas will be explored in depth in the following sections.

The responses presented here are not subjected to statistical test, nor is the sampling of women students necessarily representative. Our purpose was not to draw conclusions which were generalizable to this university, or to others. Nonetheless, the correspondence of our findings with those of the Taskforce of the Joint Committee suggests that we have tapped a very real and enduring set of issues. What we did seek with our questionnaire was to provide a forum of sorts for the relatively easy (and anonymous) voicing of observations and feelings about sexual discrimination at Harvard. As a result, our findings show what goes on, not how frequently such events occur, nor how many students report them.

The questionnaire did not provide lists of possible responses to each question. We sought to have the women students define the range and nature of practices viewed as discriminatory. As a result, we have accounts written by students which give us a much richer idea of instances of discrimination and how our respondents reacted and felt about them. This seems to us to be the most valid way to document the relationship between discriminatory practices and educational experience.

Respondents provided much more information about experiences with faculty and other students than about course materials or support services, and this is reflected in the length of the respective sections in the report. We do not believe, however, that one problem area is more important than another; instead, it seems to us that it is the mutual interaction and integration of all three aspects that is necessary for successful education and we recommend that constructive action in all of these areas be taken immediately.

II. Findings

How Does Sex Discrimination Affect the Quality of Education?

Our findings are displayed in Table 1 (at the end of this section), showing that most of our respondents reported discrimination, with no less than 63% of the respondents reporting discrimination in any school. Our results show that the longer women are students here, the more they report experiencing discrimination. In fact, more than half of the first year students, 43% of whom are in Master's programs, did not report discrimination against them.[2] On the other hand, most students who have been here longer than one year cited evidence of discrimination.

As mentioned earlier, the kinds of discrimination reported across the University included difficulties encountered in the process of education, including discriminatory treatment by faculty or colleagues; the omission of the experiences and contributions of women from course materials and research; insensitivity in structure and administration, including the absence of important support services. Finally, an overwhelming number of women cited the need for more women professors as the key to solving all three types of problems.

In addition to responses to our questionnaires, we have information from some students about why they failed to respond. Their comments convinced us that the incidents we describe later are not unusual or limited to those who returned questionnaires. Two examples demonstrate why women may not want to complain about discriminatory practices. They may fear recrimination:

> After I had responded in my own handwriting to each section of the questionnaire, I re-read the whole thing and decided, as I am sure did many other women, that really I was just too identifiable. Explicit incidents of sex discrimination simply could not be recounted. Renowned misogynists would be too easily identifiable. To complain about particular departments would, I feel, be folly for someone who would like to pursue an academic career.

> I've sort of put all the problems I had at Harvard behind me. I'm working on my dissertation off-campus and don't want to stir up any problems which could arise if I described incidents which have happened to me and they were recognized.

---

[2] It should be noted that questionnaires were returned between October 1979 and January 1980. Thus, first-year students had been at Harvard for at most 5 months. This may account for the absence of reported discrimination.

The following analysis of the problems women face at Harvard documents the experiences of our respondents with respect to encounters with sex discrimination. The appendix contains a description of our methods of collecting, categorizing, and analyzing this information and a description of our respondents. The quotations speak for themselves and describe more vividly than any paraphrase or tabulation the actual experience of women at Harvard.[3] They are direct statements about the sorts of practices that we hope to begin to eliminate through dissemination of this report.

On the basis of our findings, we recommend the following:

1. First and foremost, we urge that more women faculty be hired into both junior positions and senior tenured slots. This would help, both directly and indirectly, to attenuate the effects of many of the problems discussed in this report.

2. All persons in the University need to be made more aware of the kinds of sex discrimination that occur and more sensitive to the effects on women students. The deans of each school must take leadership roles to educate University employees about ways to eliminate discriminatory practices.

3. Faculty members need to be encouraged to include more material by and about women in their courses, including work within a critical, feminist perspective.

4. Interested female and male students should be allowed and encouraged to pursue scholarly and professional work in areas which can be loosely defined as Women's Studies, that is, work specifically about women.

5. Childcare for all parents is required for them to work effectively and Harvard should take a role in making such facilities available.

6. Given the problem of crime in the Cambridge community, better security measures are critical for the protection of all University members, but especially for women, who are vulnerable to rape.

7. Finally, the provision of equal athletic facilities, equal financial aid for married women, more flexible class scheduling for parents, and counseling about the career-family tradeoffs would help equalize the educational experiences of men and women at Harvard.

---

[3] Direct references to particular schools and departments are excluded from all quotations in order to protect the respondents and to eliminate the need to provide a representative sample of comments for each department and school. The symbol [...] indicate deletion of a school or department name.

Table 1*

Percentage of Respondents Who Reported Incidents of Discrimination by Year and Program and by School

	Reported Discrimination	Did not Report Discrimination	Number of Respondents
Year in Program			
Year 1	47	53	70
Years 2-4	86	14	147
Years 5-10	91	9	32
School			
Arts & Sciences	76	24	94
Design	64	36	11
Divinity	92	8	12
Education	63	37	40
Government (KSG)	79	21	17
Law	79	21	28
Medical	95	5	19
Public Health	79	21	28

Percentage of Respondents Who Reported Incidents of Discrimination Within School and Year

	Year in Program		
	1	2-4	More than 5
School			
Arts & Sciences	29 (n=14)	83 (n=53)	93 (n=28)
Design	50 (n=2)	67 (n=9)	-- (n=0)
Divinity	100 (n=2)	90 (n=10)	-- (n=0)
Education	40 (n=20)	89 (n=18)	100 (n=2)
Government (KSG)	67 (n=9)	100 (n=8)	-- (n=0)
Law	64 (n=11)	88 (n=17)	-- (n=0)
Medical	100 (n=2)	94 (n=17)	-- (n=0)
Public Health	50 (n=10)	94 (n=15)	100 (n=3)

*This table does not include 8 respondents who did not report their year or school.

A. Process of Education: Interaction of Women Students with Faculty and Colleagues

Educational experience is influenced by the nature of faculty/student relations as well as relations among student peers. Due to the distinct types of problems and different emphases, we have separated our descriptions of the two groups.

Women reported instances of faculty attitudes and behaviors resulting in less attention to women's academic progress on all of the formal and informal levels of the educational process -- in the classroom, in research and on the job market. Among peers, the greatest disadvantages stem from women's relative exclusion from informal information sharing and from the sort of camaraderie which exists among male students.

Faculty

The majority of respondents who are beyond their first year at Harvard report some form of discrimination by faculty:

	Report of Sex Discrimination by Faculty?[4]	
	No	Yes
First year student	75% (n=33)	25% (n=11)
Student beyond first year	41% (n=67)	59% (n=98)

We have classified the reported difficulties with faculty into four categories: sex role stereotyping, less respect for women, sexual harassment, and sexual tension.

Sex Role Stereotyping. Stereotyping occurs when preconceived notions about an individual's abilities and appropriate roles are assigned on the basis of some readily observable characteristics (sex, race) rather than on the basis of capabilities or aspirations. Many students reported incidents in which they felt faculty responses to them carried implicit (or explicit) assumptions that women belonged in different academic and career pursuits than men.

Some felt that faculty members considered them unwelcome as graduate students, particularly in fields which have traditionally been predominantly all male:

---

[4] 209 respondents mentioned interactions with faculty.

> Some professors don't want to talk to women. Sometimes you feel that they look at you in a way that means they are thinking why you are not doing a "woman's job."

Even as women are entering previously male disciplines and professions, they still find themselves expected to go into the "softer," less quantitative and more "service" oriented subfields:

> A professor suggested that material in his course may be "offensive" or "heavy" and that women might prefer to take family law, women in the law, and such courses.

And research interests are pigeonholed as being women's concerns:

> Every time I tell my chairman about my dissertation, he says, "Oh, that's a very important issue for women." My thesis involves issues which are important for both men and women, but he persists in relating to me as a woman, rather than as a serious student, as if the two are incompatible.

Furthermore, women cited blatant examples in which lower valuations were placed on women's careers than on men's, and consequently, faculty indicated that less effort was required for women:

> With good intentions, faculty members have advised me not to worry too much about competing for teaching positions in better schools. They have assured me that I can always "excuse" my work record by saying that I had to follow my husband's career.

> Our department chairman stated (when assuring me of his concern for the good placement of his students after their degree) that it was mandatory that at least "Joe" and "Jim" get good jobs since they were men. When seeing the disbelief on my face, he quickly added that since I was a wife and mother the tight job situation might not be of such great concern to me.

> My female colleagues and I discovered a pattern by which the advisor in our program was saying to us "don't be so instrumental," when we incorporated considerations of potentially useful contacts and future job prospects into our study plans. He was not giving that message to the male students we talked to. He encouraged us just to study whatever interested us and enjoy our stay at Harvard.

Some of the examples of discrimination cited above seem blatant and extreme. More subtle variations of these themes involve unconscious exclusions of women, and paying greater attention to their physical appearance and "emotional" needs, rather than providing them with academic support:

> I have yet to hear a professor comment on the daily appearance of a male colleague. I have yet to go through a week without some comment pertaining to my appearance.
>
> In many cases I have gone to a professor with an appointment to talk about a specific project and the professor has taken up the time asking about personal and emotional reactions to certain issues, leaving me without guidance. While the professor was trying to learn to be "sensitive" and to deal with women students, making constant comparisons of how I must feel to how his wife would feel, the fact that he was trying to do this on "my time" and that I did not get feedback or more time to meet with him harmed me. I could have aggressively pushed things back on topic, but felt it would have been counterproductive.

These themes are further developed in the following sections. Both subtle and blatant incidents result in less attention to women in the classroom, in academic advising, and on the job market.

Less Respect for Women Students. In addition, women reported many incidents of less respect involving hostility, condescension, and the ignoring of female presence. Coping with these challenges to their self-esteem imposes a special burden on women, which often minimizes their confidence in their own work. Furthermore, the positive or negative character of the teacher-student relationship cannot help but influence subsequent behavior of male students towards their female peers.

Several examples of female invisibility in class were cited:

> A professor repeatedly cuts off women while in the middle of answering in class. He rarely does this to men.

And:

> Two of the tenured professors in my department remember the male graduate students' names but somehow have trouble remembering women grad students names, although there are only 1½ times as many men as women. Those of us with brown hair (tall/short; fat/thin; long hair/short hair; first year to ninth year) get confused with each other repeatedly!

Hostility is also reported in faculty evaluation of students:

> Women are subjected to more harsh criticism of papers, seminar reports, etc., by certain male members of the faculty. This criticism has at times even been deliberately taunting. One member of the faculty jokes about how he has for years intimidated his female students.

and in faculty comments about all-female classes:

> A professor referred to a class consisting entirely of women as a goddamn chicken pen.

and in deliberately sexist jokes:

> When women object to sexism in the lectures, they are hissed. Some lecturers make sexist jokes beginning with, "the women won't like this, but. . ."

> There have been a few instances of nude females in slides with red high heels in discussions of unrelated diseases. Our class lets the instructor know that this is inappropriate.

We were encouraged to find that at least in some cases, members of the class are speaking up to express the unacceptable nature of such material.

Condescension toward women's abilities is also expressed, particularly in traditionally male academic fields:

> In quantitative courses if you are a woman there seems to be less respect for women than for men, and an assumption that women will have trouble. Furthermore, if you enjoy non-quantitative courses more than quantitative ones if you are a woman, the assumption seems to be that you're less intelligent. This is a mixture of technocratic bias and sex discrimination, but the effect is to make women feel inferior.

Women also note paternalistic attitudes toward women, who are assumed to be childish and soft:

> Professors make a genuine attempt to treat all students fairly. However, I think the massive underrepresentation of women on the faculty tends to encourage the (male) professors in any inclinations they may have to equate femaleness with childishness, innocence, etc. . . . Which is to say, the professors often seem more patronizing/paternal towards their female students than towards their male students.

> I think male professors have the attitude that the women are not as tough as the men and should be treated more softly. The women have to prove that they can stand up to competition. There is not bias one way or the other about the men. They can sink or swim, solely on their own merit.

Sexual Harassment. Taking disrespect one step further leads us to sexual harassment. When we use the term sexual harassment, we are referring to unwanted sexual attention -- attention which is particularly problematic when the victim is in a dependent position either to an employer, an instructor, or an advisor. We are concerned that this problem, which is reported less often than others, should by virtue of its sensationalism overshadow the more ubiquitous kinds of bias which women encounter in their daily life. However, we did receive alarming reports of harassment. The two main types of examples are suggestive comments by faculty members and direct sexual encounters.

In the first category, the incidents are distressing because the faculty members are not directing their attention to their women students' intellectual contribution, but are being sidetracked by extraneous details as a result of the student's sex:

> During an oral exam, a male examiner commented on my eyes while I was in the process of explaining an answer to a question.

> I find it very disconcerting to be carrying on a serious conversation with a male faculty member, only to notice that his eyes are fixed, not on my face, but at the level of my breasts -- not a casual glance, but a lingering, persistent stare.

Even more serious are those incidents in which professors' comments undermine the presentation of a woman's work in public, undercutting either her ability to perform or her opportunity to have her work taken seriously, or both:

> I was discussing my work in a public setting when a professor cut me off and asked if I had freckles all over my body.

and:

> A male professor, introducing his female graduate student who was giving a seminar, said: "It's nice to find a student who is intelligent and can write, but it doesn't hurt if she's also good-looking."

Occasionally sexual harassment takes on its most extreme form in which a student is asked for sexual favors either in return for assistance in her graduate work or to prevent professional harm:

> When I approached the head of the program committee for financial aid assistance, he told me that me might be able to give me $100/month and that his sexual demands would not be great, so it would be to my advantage.

At other times, the problem stems from a general assumption of availability but no negative consequences for refusal result:

> I've had very mild but unmistakable sexual advances by male professors. A general feeling of their horniness, although they are respectable, married people. I am a single woman. This has happened with two faculty people, nonrecurring and nonpunitive when I did not acknowledge them. Annoying, nevertheless.

Often, students' complaints of sexual harassment and requests for assistance are treated as unimportant by faculty advisors, leaving the student to bear the burden alone:

> I experienced several instances of sexual harassment on a student internship. When I conferred with the faculty member responsible for the seminar portion of the internship course as well as for my placement, he did not assist me in problem-solving, strategizing or finding another placement. His comment was "There are no victims."

Two students described their methods for preventing these situations from arising and show that resignation, or at least a sense of irony, are required for self-defense in this environment:

> I have not encountered discrimination by faculty with regard to classroom and academic activities. I have, however, consciously chosen not to take particular courses with faculty who have reputations concerning sexual discrimination. In this way, my scope of available coursework was limited.

> Most of the observable harassment is junior male faculty on the make with women grad students. I've found this often uncomfortable, possibly contrived, but not fatal to either party. Only a very professional attitude can overcome this and the subtle stuff which is everywhere. Blank incomprehension also helps. Best of all, a sense of humor, an office at home and a large dog. Almost no one harasses a woman with a large dog.

All of these responses about sexual harassment show how such incidents interfere with a student's ability to carry out her work, either because people do not take seriously her contributions or because women feel the need to exclude themselves from various activities in order to avoid possible difficulties. While cases of actionable sexual harassment do not occur very frequently, many women carry the constant burden of needing to be aware of such a possibility.

Sexual Tension. Though some charges of sexual harassment were made, perhaps a more prominent problem is the need to deal with ambiguities in relationships between men and women as women move into previously all-male contexts.

One woman comments that faculty awkwardness in dealing with the few women students participating in professional conferences results in exclusion from informal socializing in which much important information is shared:

> Faculty men at professional conferences seem reluctant to include me in such activities as dinner, going for drinks, etc., with colleagues. I believe that this is due to concern about appearances of sexual involvement. So few women attend these conferences that the behavior of women and the men with them becomes conspicuous. How can I "casually establish professional contact?" Includ- more women would help immensely.

Another more complicated problem raised by several women is the potential for sexual tension between a graduate student and her advisor or mentor with whom she works closely, and on whose recommendation her career advancement may depend:

> It would make a tremendous difference to me to have more female faculty members. The potential for exploitation, even relatively unknowing as well as more direct and conscious exploitation, is incredibly high in a system where those with power are of the opposite sex from many of the students. Emotional bonds with those who are one's mentors, instructors, guides are the norm -- this certainly has been acknowledged through history between male faculty and "their" students. When the student is female, the emotional bonds all-too-easily become sexual, disrupting the student's life fundamentally in innumerable intellectual, emotional, and career ways. Students should have the option of working closely with a professor -- of equal power as the other faculty -- of his or her own sex. Men currently have that option and thus are protected from these very difficult and too often exploited dynamics; women do not have the option.

One woman described her coping strategy:

> At first, there was a kind of sexual tension between myself and my thesis advisor. On my part this led to a difficulty in talking to him; I resorted to written notes. Obviously, this was detrimental to a quick and stimulating exchange of ideas. On his part, there was a nervousness that led to cracks like: "I'd like to close the door, that is, if you trust me, ha, ha, ha." We eventually carved out a working relationship, but the time lost might amount to a couple of months.

Summary. Stereotyping intellectual pursuits and careers appropriate for women leads (in some cases) to unequal support of women's classroom learning and research activities, and to unequal assistance on the job market. The negative atmosphere created for women students --

in incidents of hostility and condescension, or in ignoring women's presence -- impose an emotional burden on women students which drains energy from their academic pursuits. Sexual harassment on an individual basis undermines women's ability to learn from the faculty; when derogatory statements are made in public, they undercut her opportunity to be taken seriously by other faculty and students. Sexual tension may result in exclusion from informal socializing among professional colleagues and in difficulties in dealing with male mentors.

It is noteworthy that in all classes of incidents, women feel that having more women on the faculty -- and in particular more tenured women -- would improve the situation. Their presence would render stereotyping less compelling to the extent that they serve as effective counter examples; they would represent potential allies in counteracting specific problems of negative atmosphere and stereotyping; and they would provide an alternative source of advisors, free of the sexual complications that may accompany relationships with male advisors.

Peers and Colleagues

Our respondents noted fewer negative experiences with male students than with faculty. In fact, less than one half of the responses and comments indicated that women students have experienced discrimination in dealing with their male counterparts. As the table indicated, students who have been here longer cite more sexist incidents:

	Experienced Discrimination by Peers?[5]	
	No	Yes
First year student	87% (n=54)	13% (n=8)
Student beyond first year	59% (n=103)	41% (n=69)

Among those women who mentioned problems with peers, several themes emerge: sex-role stereotyping, treatment as a sexual object, sexual tension, and exclusion. In all of these cases, it was not personal qualities, but the sex of the individuals *per se* that affected interactions. These kinds of responses to women create a negative climate for women which frequently leads them to withdraw from informal relations among male colleagues. Clearly, this experience impedes the creation of cooperative efforts. Finally, insensitive treatment by male colleagues interferes with women students' opportunities for equal education.

Sex-Role Stereotyping. Perceptions of a woman's performance may be biased *a priori* by lower expectations. Several respondents stated that women must "prove themselves" in their departments. A scientist indicated that her peers are more likely to challenge women's professional commitment than men's. Others felt that women students are "dismissed if their work is not twice as good as the men's." Such attitudes create a further barrier to a woman's success.

[5] 234 of our respondents commented on interactions with peers.

A condescending attitude towards career women occurs in tandem with lower expectations for women's intellectual prowess. One woman noted that in an environment which is not predominantly male, a pervasive attitude that professional females are atypical persists. Several people note that different rules are used to evaluate women and men:

> When women are outspoken and forceful, they are labeled aggressive.
>
> Males are assessed on intellect, women colleagues may find their personalities and physical appearance are of prime importance.

Sex-role stereotyping makes it difficult for men to work cooperatively with women. Men ask one another about their research, yet ask women about unrelated issues (for example, cooking). One woman cited several incidents that occurred at a predominantly male publication office when dealing with fellow editors. These included being asked to type a male colleague's work for him, being told how nice it was to have a woman sitting at the typewriter usually used by the male secretary, and being embarrassed by the taunts of a colleague she turned down for a date. Her frustration is apparent in her comments:

> This is all occurring at a student magazine where I am trying to be an equal member. I don't like leading this double life -- on the one hand, I am, like the rest, a writer and editor. On the other hand, I have to think about standing up for my principles without alienating my obviously insensitive colleagues.

Treatment as Sex Object. A number of cases, including several extraordinary circumstances, were cited in which women were treated as sex objects in degrading ways. There were several cases of clear sexual harassment. One woman reported an attempted rape by a colleague while planning a co-presentation. A more typical comment is:

> My men classmates tend to view me as a sexual object or possible wife and have difficulty seeing me as an individual and accepting me as one. I have received unsolicited advice on how to dress and how to wear make-up from male students.

The problem is, as one woman commented, "the non-professional dimension can interfere with professional respect."

Sexual Tension. To criticize the practice of treating women as sex objects is not to deny that sexual attraction exists among men and women working in the same department. Nevertheless, in fields in which men have not been accustomed to dealing with women on a professional basis, females have difficulties establishing social relations because the norms have not been defined:

> The process of socializing with entering male students involves an elaborate testing behavior. I have to insure their understanding that my intentions are academic and friendly -- not sexual. I find them retreating if I seek them out rather than waiting for them to seek me out for conversation.

Exclusion. Exclusion appears to be the most important problem faced by women when dealing with male colleagues:

> When I first came to Harvard I thought my male colleagues treated women students fairly; we were included in informal discussions about courses and our opinions were respected. Three years later, I have grown very disillusioned. When it came to forming serious collegial relationships, co-authoring papers, invitations to closed seminars, and any other activity conferring academic prestige, my male peers sought out other men. Men who I thought were my friends, who had read and respected my work, were suddenly inaccessible to me for serious collaboration.

Most often the separation is unconscious and subtle:

> I don't think there is a malicious attempt to exclude women -- I just think they feel more comfortable working with other men. But there was something else going on too. I think my male colleagues were jockeying to form collegial relationships that might be useful to them in the future. They had learned Harvard's message -- that prestigious institutions do not hire women faculty members -- thus they formed their ties with the men who they think will be more likely to "make it."

Some women indicate that they are frustrated in their search for male friendships in their departments. If they do gain access to all-male groups, they often find in the end that they do not enjoy it:

> Classmates are oddly worse than faculty. We were excluded from mental muscle flexing and social jockeying that goes on in the first year. When I finally succeeded in being "one of the boys" I discovered drinking and belching and commenting on the thickness of a woman's ankles were not my thing.

Summary. While women desire to be included as equals in the informal intellectual and social conversations that occur among their peers, they are not willing to identify themselves, either as a sex object or as "one of the boys." What has become clear is that there is a lag between men's expectations of women and women's own perceptions of their aspirations and role in the academic community. This situation may be alleviated in part by more open dialogue between men and women students and by greater acknowledgment of the issues.

B. The Content of Education: Course Materials

Course materials were reported to have three major problems. The first of these is the presentation of materials in lectures and texts. This includes the use of language in general and the pronoun "he" in particular, with its assumption of norms based on the lives of men. The second is the representation, or actually misrepresentation, of women's roles and contributions in various fields of study. The third involves the way in which the traditional omission and/or misrepresentation of women is interpreted in the context of lectures and coursework.

The responses about course materials indicate that there are "more problems with omission than with biased inclusion." Another woman notes, "It is not a question of presenting them [women] fairly, but of presenting them at all!" Across professional and academic fields, it is felt that "we are simply assumed not to have affected life or law." A frequent complaint, with reference to this issue of presentation concerns the exclusive use of the pronoun "he." While this may appear trivial to some, it is argued by many that language shapes as well as represents the world and mind. Although we recognize that judges, scholars, scientists, business managers, doctors and leaders of every sort, have largely been men, the continued assumption expressed in our language that these positions will always be held by men alienates women. One woman notes:

> No great work has ever been attributed to any women in any of my [...] classes. Even a woman who has shared the fame when she is part of a team has been passed over by lecturers as "these gentlemen."

Another describes her queasy sense of surprise upon learning that "Smith" of "the theory of two great men: Smith and Jones," was in fact a woman. Whether due to habit or mere thoughtlessness, allowing language to eradicate the presence of women is unjust to past as well as to future generations of men and women scholars.

It was commonly noted that many texts either make absolutely no mention of women, or include only stereotyped and subservient portraits of them. This seems to be the case in many University departments. For example, medical students noted that normative data has always been given for the 70-kilogram man, although recent efforts have been made to include statistics for women. Some found materials to be blatantly offensive:

> You should see [...] teaching films we see -- presenting women as objects, with all male physicians, films made in the early 1960s or so. And plenty of medical texts use Playboy-like illustrations of females to gratuitously illustrate a point.

Similar problems were reported by students in social sciences:

> Theories of kinship and marriage are inextricably bound to the model of males exchanging sisters and daughters.

and in the humanities:

> The whole problem of feminist aesthetics is not touched upon.

And others report:

> Of course, male teachers hardly deal with women -- twentieth century [...] poets, for example. There is strong movement of contemporary female poets which went unnoticed in the course [...] last year.

> In my department, where women comprise about half of the students, no women's perspective is presented or allowed. The examples given in lectures almost always recount some story about some man, rarely about a woman. One begins to wonder whether these sorts of experiences can be enjoyed by women, too. In addition to problems of content <u>about</u> women, the presentation of work <u>by</u> women is apparently also absent.

> The reading lists underrepresent women both in the [...] and in the [...] Departments. The list of the [...] Department has also neglected recent developments, as it has not been updated since 1953.

> There are almost no judicial opinions written by female judges included in our material. It is hard to believe that none worth reading exist!

Clearly then, our respondents feel that women are underrepresented in their coursework and lectures. In fact, except for first year students, a majority of women graduate students reported that course materials are biased negatively towards women:

Negatively Biased Course Materials?[6]

	No	Yes
First year student	69% (n=34)	31% (n=15)
Student beyond first year	45% (n=62)	55% (n=67)

[6] 178 of our respondents discussed course materials.

When women are presented in the materials, how are they portrayed? Many women commented that when women are discussed, it is often only with reference to men, as, for example, in the legal notion of women as the property of men. Differences between men and women sometimes form the content of lectures which present information about women.

> Very little is even mentioned in any course material that is relevant to women. What has been mentioned are some of the studies describing differences in achievement/aptitude scores in math, etc., in high school students (i.e., males better) and some endocrine studies that have shown that male infants who had to be surgically changed to females were "tomboyish" -- e.g., evidence for innate sexual differences that demonstrate aggression, higher activity level, etc., in males.

Or the issue is considered as a separable, special area:

> This is a major problem. Although male professors give lip service to including "female" development, and female authors, they still consider women a "special topic." They treat "it" like other special topics, devoting one lecture either to a guest-lecturer who is a woman, or to the subject of women. Few female authors are included on the bibliographies.

While psychology is a science that appears pointedly subject to cultural interpretation, the physical sciences on the surface at least, seem immune to such biases. The melting point of a crystal is decidedly absolute. However, the choice of what is studied and deemed important to study is not, but is influenced by culture and politics.

In history, for example, many students note that women are again largely ignored and an appropriate critical perspective is absent. The subservient status of women, especially in non-western countries, when considered at all, is taken for granted and is not adequately evaluated.

It seems, then, that our respondents consider women to be either predominantly ignored or misrepresented by their respective fields. The interpretation of this negligence by professors and their methods of alleviating the problems indicate their biases to their male and female students. Some institutions have created Women's Studies departments to address these issues. At Harvard, there are several courses about women in particular academic or professional disciplines and the response of students has been enthusiastic:

> There is a very helpful course here at the [...] on Women and the Law -- taught by women faculty, but it is not offered every year.

However, these courses are not always accessible to interested students:

> Most courses don't include much literature by women at all. I find it incredible that the department doesn't have one women's literature course. The only one I know of is in [...], is limited to 25, and requires a reading knowledge of French.

The central problem then remains: to incorporate women into the mainstream of academia and the professions and to insure the full achievement of the increasing numbers of women students. Whatever one's views on "women's studies," profound and widespread issues are uniformly being ignored on the scholarly plane at Harvard. Furthermore, new feminist theory and criticism that is being produced in the fields of psychology, literature, history, theology, and philosophy, has not penetrated the respective departments to any significant degree here, and there is no incentive to promote the scholarly potential of this work.

While no one can deny that the limited representation of women in scholarly works is a function of historical accident, the attitude towards, and the interpretation of, this history must be reconsidered by all concerned in terms of its accuracy, its bias, and its effects on men and women students. Graduate women speak with reserved optimism: a psychology professor points out Freud's inadequacies; a female professor "apologizes" in advance for "sexist material"; a law professor notes the sexual inequity of a code; the Astronomy Department is "aware and proud of women astronomers"; students note that male and female classmates call attention to biased material in lectures. On the other hand, students note that calling attention to offensive material can also bring boos and snickers from the class; one student was mortified at the levity with which a lecture on rape laws was treated and further depressed by the realization that these colleagues will soon represent women clients. In general, women students report being pessimistic about altering the traditional structure of graduate education.

With respect to this area of discrimination, we suggest two preliminary steps for overcoming some of the problems: 1) Faculty members should be encouraged to include course discussions of the contributions of women, and to, in turn, encourage their students to view women's studies as a legitimate and important area for scholarship in their fields; 2) More women faculty should be hired. This would accelerate the integration of women's studies course materials as well as provide women scholars with the opportunity to make further contributions in their areas of study. As one student concludes:

> Courses taught by women about women are the only place where women are taken seriously either in terms of the course content or as participants. Most faculty are not even comfortable with the use of inclusive language with respect to humanity.

C. The Support Structure of Education: Services and Facilities

Many women students felt that facilities and services provided by Harvard are based on the model of a married male student with a traditional wife. Women commented that they could not figure out how a married woman with children could successfully pursue an education here. Further, many noted that a lack of security measures and unequal physical facilities limited their ability to take full advantage of Harvard's environment. While changing the attitudes of professors, administrators, and students so that they respect women as equal is very difficult to do, the provision of equal services and facilities for women should be an easier task.

Women asked for three major changes in services and facilities.

1. Equal athletic facilities.
2. Better security and lighting to discourage physical attacks.
3. Greater availability of childcare for both mothers and fathers.

Other problems included the greater difficulty married women have in obtaining financial aid, the awkward scheduling of classes in early mornings or in the evenings, and the lack of counseling for graduate students,[7] especially concerning tradeoffs between professional and private life. These will be discussed in the following sections.

Athletic and Physical Facilities

Respondents who mentioned facilities were often quite negative in their comments. Some said facilities were "atrocious," others "decidedly unequal," and still others, "very annoying." One woman surveyed sports facilities and found the following distribution:

Women: 1 shower, 1 toilet, 1 sink, and locker space provided in an old dormitory room.
Men: 12 showers, 5 toilets, 4 urinals, and a large locker room.

It was reported by another that the showers at Radcliffe Gymn are often not working. The absence of a woman gymnastics teacher and women's classes was noted, and one person complained about the lack of access to weight rooms and a universal gym.

Athletic facilities were not the only ones which spurred complaints. Women complained about the absence of working or filled tampon machines, the low number of rest rooms, and even their remoteness from classrooms:

[7] However, GSAS students do have access to the Bureau of Study Counsel.

> I remember breaks during long lecture mornings -- since there were not enough women's toilets close enough, inevitably some women got back quite late to class.

In some lecture classrooms, chairs are attached in such close proximity to the tables that a pregnant woman could not possibly fit into the chairs. Others at the Medical Area found restroom doors labelled "Doctors," meaning "Men," to be symbolically degrading to women students.

Security and Lighting

Good security and lighting are essential to equal education for women at Harvard in that superior work often requires long nights, and poor security forces women to limit or, at least, carefully schedule their time on campus to coincide with daylight hours. Women complained of the lack of safety in many areas of the university and of the lack of sensitivity on the part of professors to their complaints when scheduling extra sessions:

> The area around the Law School Library is not well lit at night, Also, evening meetings, classes and problem-sessions are more difficult for off-campus women concerned about safety to attend.

Also, fear is translated into curtailed facility use, as this example shows:

> I deplore the lack of lights in the main yard. This has often severely hampered my use of the libraries, unless I arrange to work with another friend.

After a recent assault in the Law School tunnels, signs directing women to stay together while studying appeared in the women's rest rooms. When women become afraid of walking alone in buildings or in library stacks, they are unable to gain equal access to the necessary prerequisites for a good education. The burden should be on the University to ensure the safety of all students. Although some women were aware of the existence of the Harvard Police Escort service, they complained that it is very slow:

> Late nights in the studio are especially trying when time to go home. However the police escort is great when they have the time. I have had to wait up to 45 minutes for a ride, which at times forces me to walk home late at night.

One solution for helping women to become less vulnerable to attack is through training sessions, which should be more available in the graduate and professional schools.

Childcare

The difficulties of combining responsibility for children and successful academic performance and the lack of sensitivity at Harvard both in terms of providing adequate childcare and in allowing flexibility of schedules made this an emotional issue for respondents. Many felt the impediments toward combining school and family were overt discrimination. Those graduate women who are single parents especially feel the University's lack of awareness of family needs. One woman talked of "the ever-looming threat of the unrelenting registrar's office and a sick child on exam day." These critics argued that the University must begin to accept women more fully, insuring them the support they need to combine career and family in two ways: by allowing greater program flexibility and by providing childcare.

Those who advocate childcare insist that it be a high priority for the University:

> Many women and men in my class are married and have children. Since the other partner needs to work, a child care program should be set up immediately.

Women who have tried to adjust to the limited availability of childcare are given no institutional support:

> Five other women and I had small infants during our first year. We asked for a room in the library to set up a playpen and share. No accommodations could be made.

And, attempts to point out specific problems are not met with sympathy:

> Because of child care needs, there are several classes I am unable to take (before 8:30 or after 5:00). When I noted this to a professor, he remarked, "others have worked it out."

Part-time attendance is one way women balance children and school, especially if they are single parents and also need part-time work. Many respondents noted an increasing bias against part-time attendance:

> My program abolished part-time status when I came here. These are strong, if subtle forces in my professional training and growth.

In addition, they implied that the bias against part-time attendance was a signal of a socialization to put less attention into the attempt to try to make careers more human and flexible:

> There seems to be a presumption that part-time attendance is bad. Men with families can go full-time because they can dump all their other responsibilities on their wives.

The net result of these institutional failures is to leave most women convinced that raising children cannot be combined with graduate and professional study.

The perceived lack of attention to the fact that both women and men will be trying to mesh family and career during their lives leaves some women unable to mention their family constraints to faculty. This can have crucial consequences for gaining job referrals at the preferred time:

> A friend who plans to have a child is afraid to mention it to anyone in the department, for fear she won't be taken seriously. I think this is a considerable problem.

Other Issues

Many comments from women without children centered around entering professions with few female role models and learning little about how they could succeed and still have a family life.

> Aren't the so-called 'women's issues' (family and career, kids and career) properly the concern of both sexes? I would like to hear of others' lifestyle decisions much more than I do.

> I wish there were more women faculty so that I could learn how they were able to coordinate career and family.

Not only do women feel there is not enough awareness about the tradeoffs that current structures of professions require, but they also feel a presumption that marriage will necessarily make some women less successful. Many women remarked on the differences in treatment of married women from single women:

> Married women are not taken seriously (i.e., as individuals) with regard to job placement and career plans.

> Another professor disapproves of married women in the department.

> At interviews there are subtle questions about marital status and job commitment.

> The chairman told me that faculty here tend to drop concern over jobs for women who marry.

> As soon as I married, I no longer received financial aid, though my husband was also a student with no income and excessive debts. . . . I feel this type of treatment is more prevalent in the case of married women than men.

While many women anticipated similar problems in future professions, they felt this was no excuse for Harvard to "go along with the rest of the world," in failing to acknowledge the aspirations of women. For example, women doctors have asked why Harvard could not pioneer new medical duty shifts, ones not comprised of 72-hour stints such as the current ones which make childcare arrangements nearly impossible. Women and men in all professions could benefit from experiments in job sharing in professional University appointments. Also a reconsideration of first-year graduate and professional programs that stress grueling workloads might lead to more effective education for both women and men. Harvard could provide a leadership role in the redesign of professional education to allow both women and men greater flexibility in their public and private lives.

III. A Recommendation

More Women Faculty

The first major recommendation we wish to propose relates to women's overwhelming affirmative answer to our question: "Would it make any difference if there were more women faculty in your program?" The comments echo the 1971 Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences:

> The discouraging effect of such remarks [that women are not serious scholars or do not have minds for certain academic careers] can to a certain extent be alleviated by goodwill and tact on the part of male faculty members; but female graduate students clearly feel that the hiring of more faculty women is the only permanent solution. We are inclined to agree. A situation in which professors are all males, whereas many students are females, tends to reduce the drive, the ambition, and the hopes of graduate women.

Nine years later, the same issues and problems remains and, again, we report a call for more women faculty. The reasons for demanding more women vary, but we will offer some diverse examples from different questionnaires.

The University has stated its intention to provide equal opportunity for women through its affirmative action plans. However, as we look at the ranks of the faculty, we find that only 3% of tenured professors are women. This suggests strongly that the faculties of Harvard do not in fact consider women to be equal to or as competent as men, and this message is clear to the students. For example:

> It would make a tremendous difference if there were more tenured women in the school. Untenured women are away on leave frequently, and last year all 7 women faculty associated with my program were away. This leaves women students with no back-up when they try to accomplish anything innovative in their school. More senior women faculty would support women junior faculty, and in turn students would be increasingly supported. Without such support, students get to feeling very powerless, and almost invisible.

Another problem that is peculiar to women graduate students is the difficulty in finding supportive mentors and colleagues among the faculty in their department. As the following responses show, there are severe problems for women which can prevent such bonds from occurring with male faculty members:

> It would make a tremendous difference to me to have more female faculty members. The potential for exploitation, even relatively unknowing as well as more direct and conscious exploitation, is incredibly high in a system where those with power are of the opposite sex from many of the students. Emotional bonds with those who are one's mentors, instructors, guides are the norm -- this certainly has been acknowledged through history between male faculty and "their" students. When the student is female, the emotional bonds all-too-easily become sexual, disrupting the student's life fundamentally in innumerable intellectual, emotional, and career ways. Students should have the option of working closely with a professor -- of equal power as the other faculty -- of his or her own sex. Men currently have that option and thus are protected from these very difficult and too often exploited dynamics; women do not have the option.

Women students also sense that male professors are uncomfortable with close working relationships with women:

> With good intentions, faculty members have advised me not to worry too much about competing for teaching positions in better schools. They have assured me that I can always "excuse" my work record by saying that I had to follow my husband's career. Faculty men at professional conferences seem reluctant to include me in such activities as dinner, going for drinks, etc., with colleagues. I believe that this is due to concern about appearances of sexual involvement. So few women attend these conferences that the behavior of women and the men with them becomes conspicuous. How can I "casually establish professional contact?" Including more women would help immensely.

In addition, we need to see that women like ourselves can be successful professionals:

> The most effective single major action in my opinion would involve recruitment and advancement of women at the faculty level. Availability of many competent women would change attitudes and expectations of students and faculty alike.

Because there are few women in faculty positions, students may face further problems in actually getting good jobs upon graduation. With many negative attitudes toward women scholars and without the support of the "Old Boy Network," women face great difficulties, especially in today's shrinking academic job market:

> I would say this has been the single most important deficit of the Ph.D. "experience": I have no sense that my advisor and/or department supports my professional efforts, believes in my ability or cares whether or not I succeed. I would say this feeling is more pervasive with the female students.
>
> Our department chairman stated (when assuring me of his concern for the good placement of his students after their degree) that it was mandatory that at least "Joe" and "Jim" get good jobs since they were men. When seeing the disbelief on my face, he quickly added that since I was a wife and mother the tight job situation might not be of such great concern to me.

We suggest that the best remedy for this deficit is to hire more women faculty in every department:

> The few female members of the [. . .] faculty kill themselves to be supportive of female graduate students, but they are all junior faculty. Tenured women in the department would significantly improve the situation — especially in making contacts for us on the job market.

Finally, many women commented on the pervasive maleness of the environment of Harvard, which they found extremely discouraging for them as women students and which creates a different atmosphere for women students than for men students:

> I think that just because the women students are so outnumbered, and because there are so few female faculty members, we face pressures much different from those faced by male students. I'm referring to the subtle but constant pressure of feeling like women are anomalies, exceptions, oddities, compared to the rest of the members of our profession.

Fifteen percent of the respondents said that they did not think that increasing the number of women faculty would necessarily improve the situation. Among their reasons:

> The effect of women faculty depends on the women. So far my experience has been that women who are "chosen" to be department members tend to be unassertive, shy, conservative (and afraid of feminism) in their critical approach. This depends, of course, on the cooptation practices -- who would want to employ a colleague who'd challenge one's own position??
>
> I do feel that there should be some tenured women in my department, especially since they are training us to be women professors ourselves. I don't believe, however, that someone ought to be hired solely because of his/her sex. The department needs qualified people, no matter what sex, and the all-male senior faculty is, at any rate, well qualified.

While qualifying their desires for more women faculty with a concern for equal treatment of both men and women, these women agree that having more women would be helpful.

Overall then, it seems clear that in order to provide an equal education for its women students, more women faculty must be hired into both senior tenured slots and junior positions.

In a meeting with members of the Women Students' Coalition (November 7, 1979), President Bok presented several arguments to defend the small number of female faculty members in the University. In sum, he stated that the University was trying, but that there are few qualified women, and several of the women who have been offered tenured positions in recent years have declined.

These reasons seem insufficient to us. The proportion of women in recent Ph.D. graduating classes from Harvard is higher than the proportion of junior female faculty members. This suggests that there is indeed a sufficient supply of adequately trained female candidates for junior faculty positions. Furthermore, the onus for refusal of job offers to women should be placed on the University, not on the candidates. The University must assume the responsibility of altering its search and hiring procedures so that it can insure a larger proportion of women on its faculty. It needs to do so both as a partial cure for the ills discussed in this report, and as an example to other universities. Just as other schools pay close attention to Harvard's adjustments of its curriculum requirements, they will watch and follow its policies toward affirmative action in faculty hiring.

IV. Conclusions

Our initial question asked what women experience as graduate students at Harvard. The responses to our questionnaire support the following answer to that initial question: The educational experience of graduate student women at Harvard is filled with encounters of discrimination that hinder their progress toward the scholastic, academic and professional excellence theoretically offered by the various schools and departments of this university. As a result, women's experience is different than that of their male counterparts, in ways that seem to be predominantly negative. However, women students are not the only ones who suffer. Male students will be ill-equipped for a world in which women increasingly occupy leadership roles, and unprepared to fulfill their responsibilities to their women colleagues.

In general, our goal for this report is to bring to light the consequences of being a woman while seeking education at Harvard. This report provides an opportunity to measure the extent of the changes in the status of women that have occurred since the 1974 report by the Medical Area students. We hope that our findings will provoke further discussion of the issues raised and of changes on both institutional and personal levels. On the basis of the responses to our questionnaire, however, we have already suggested that several measures be taken to eliminate at least the kinds of discrimination reported here. We close this report with a recapitulation of them:

1. First and foremost, we urge that more women faculty be hired into both junior positions and senior tenured slots. This would help, both directly and indirectly, to attenuate the effects of many of the problems discussed in this report.

2. All persons in the university need to be made more aware of the kinds of sex discrimination that occur and more sensitive to the effects on women students. The deans of each school must take leadership roles to educate University employees about ways to eliminate discriminatory practices.

3. Faculty members need to be encouraged to include more material by and about women in their courses, including work within a critical, feminist perspective.

4. Interested female and male students should be allowed and encouraged to pursue scholarly and professional work in areas which can be loosely defined as Women's Studies, that is, work specifically about women.

5. Childcare for all parents is required for them to work effectively and Harvard should take a role in making such facilities available.

6. Given the problem of crime in the Cambridge community, better security measures are critical for the protection of all university members, but especially for women, who are vulnerable to rape.

7. Finally, the provision of equal athletic facilities, equal financial aid for married women, more flexible class scheduling for parents, and counseling about the career-family tradeoffs would help equalize the educational experiences of men and women at Harvard.

References

Committee on the Status of Women in the Faculty of Arts & Sciences. Report. Harvard University, 1971.

Student Taskforce of the Joint Committee on the Status of Women, Harvard Medical School, Harvard School of Dental Medicine, Harvard School of Public Health. Obstacles to Equal Education at Harvard Resulting from Sex Discrimination, 1974.

Appendix

Methods of Collecting, Categorizing, and Analyzing Information

We sent a questionnaire to all professional and graduate student women, except those in the Harvard Business School, in their Fall 1979 registration packets and requested that they be returned to us through campus mail. A copy of this questionnaire can be found at the end of this Appendix. The questionnaire was deliberately open-ended in order to encourage respondents to report in their own words whatever they felt was important, rather than checking off precoded answers.

By February 15, 1980, we had received 258 questionnaires (representing about 11% of the graduate student women) and decided then to stop further collection efforts and to begin the analysis. After much deliberation and discussion, we developed a method for coding the protocols. In addition to descriptive information about the students (school, year in program, and degree expected), twelve kinds of information were identified as being relevant to our goals. These are:

Discrimination by faculty
Discrimination by fellow students
Problems experienced in the classroom
Problems with course materials underrepresenting or misrepresenting women
Problems during work as a teaching fellow or research assistant
Discrimination in job referrals and other job-related issues
Unequal opportunities for co-authorship, funding, etc.
Problems with child care and related family-career issues
Experiences in informal or social interactions with others
Unequal athletic facilities
Safety problems
General dissatisfaction with the male-oriented atmosphere

These categories do not correspond to particular questions asked by us; instead, they represent areas that we wish to investigate and provide an effective way for classifying the open-ended essay answers.

Each questionnaire was randomly numbered and then coded in each of the twelve categories as either: a) providing information about a discriminatory practice that the student had experienced; b) providing information that the respondent did <u>not</u> feel discriminated against; or c) providing no information for a particular category. As a result, for each questionnaire we have background information about the student and information about her experiences with incidents in each of the twelve areas. Two final categories for which answers were recorded were whether more women faculty would help the situation and any other suggestions or

recommendations for change. All questionnaires were coded by members of the Coalition and then the coding was checked by a work-study undergraduate student.

These categories and the information about them provided by our respondents were primarily used to locate pertinent replies about areas of particular interest to us. In addition, they formed the basis for the frequency distributions describing our sample that follows.

Description of Respondents: Frequency Distributions

	#	% of Sample	% of Graduate Women in each School who Responded
School			
Arts & Sciences	95	37	13
Design	11	4	6
Divinity	12	5	10
Education	40	16	7
Kennedy School	19	7	20
Law	28	11	6
Medical	19	7	9
Public Health	29	11	14
Not specified	1	1	
Degree expected			
Master's, C.A.S.	66	26	
Doctor's	141	55	
J.D.	28	11	
M.D.	19	7	
Not specified	1	1	
Year			
First	70	27	
Second	66	26	
Third	39	15	
Fourth	43	17	
More than fourth	32	13	
Not specified	5	2	
Total	258		11

The Women Students' Coalition of Harvard University is preparing a report on "The Status of Women Students in Harvard Graduate and Professional Schools" to be submitted to the respective Deans and the University President.

Similar to a report published at Harvard Medical School in 1974, this report will document the experiences of women students and make general recommendations of ways to ensure equal educational opportunities at the post-graduate level. The report will be updated and reviewed periodically in order to keep the information current.

The results of this questionnaire will be summarized and reported to the Deans. All questionnaires are anonymous. If more room is required, please feel free to attach a separate sheet. Thank you for participating.

School_____ Year in Program (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc)_____ Age_____

Program_____ Degree Sought_____ Today's Date_____

Is this the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. time that you've filled out this questionnaire? As an undergraduate, did you attend a co-ed college_____ all female_____

INCIDENTS OF SEX DISCRIMINATION: Have you experienced incidents or practices of sex discrimination, either overt or subtle? Describe the incident(s) below.

FACULTY-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP: Do you think professors in your program evaluate men and women according to the same criteria and give them equal attention and respect? Would it make any difference if there were more women faculty in your program?

STUDENT CONCERNS: Do your classmates treat men and women with equal respect?

COURSE MATERIALS AND TEACHING: 1. Do the teaching topics and materials used in your program fairly present women? 2. Have you had any special problems as a teaching fellow/assistant that are related to being a woman?

PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVES: Do you feel supported both as a woman and as a professionally oriented person? Do you feel you have equal access to people, resources, and facilities necessary to satisfy your objectives? (e.g. opportunities for co-authorship, research grants, job referrals, funding?)

PERSONAL CONCERNS: Are there any problems specific to being a woman in your particular professional school (e.g. child care, course scheduling, athletic facilities)?

If you have filled out this questionnaire before, have your views changed? If so, how? Please feel free to add comments on topics not covered.

PLEASE RETURN TO:
WOMEN STUDENTS' COALITION
C/O THE RADCLIFFE FORUM
AGASSIZ HOUSE, 10 GARDEN STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

This questionnaire may be sent free through University Mail, or folded and stamped, through the U.S. Mail.